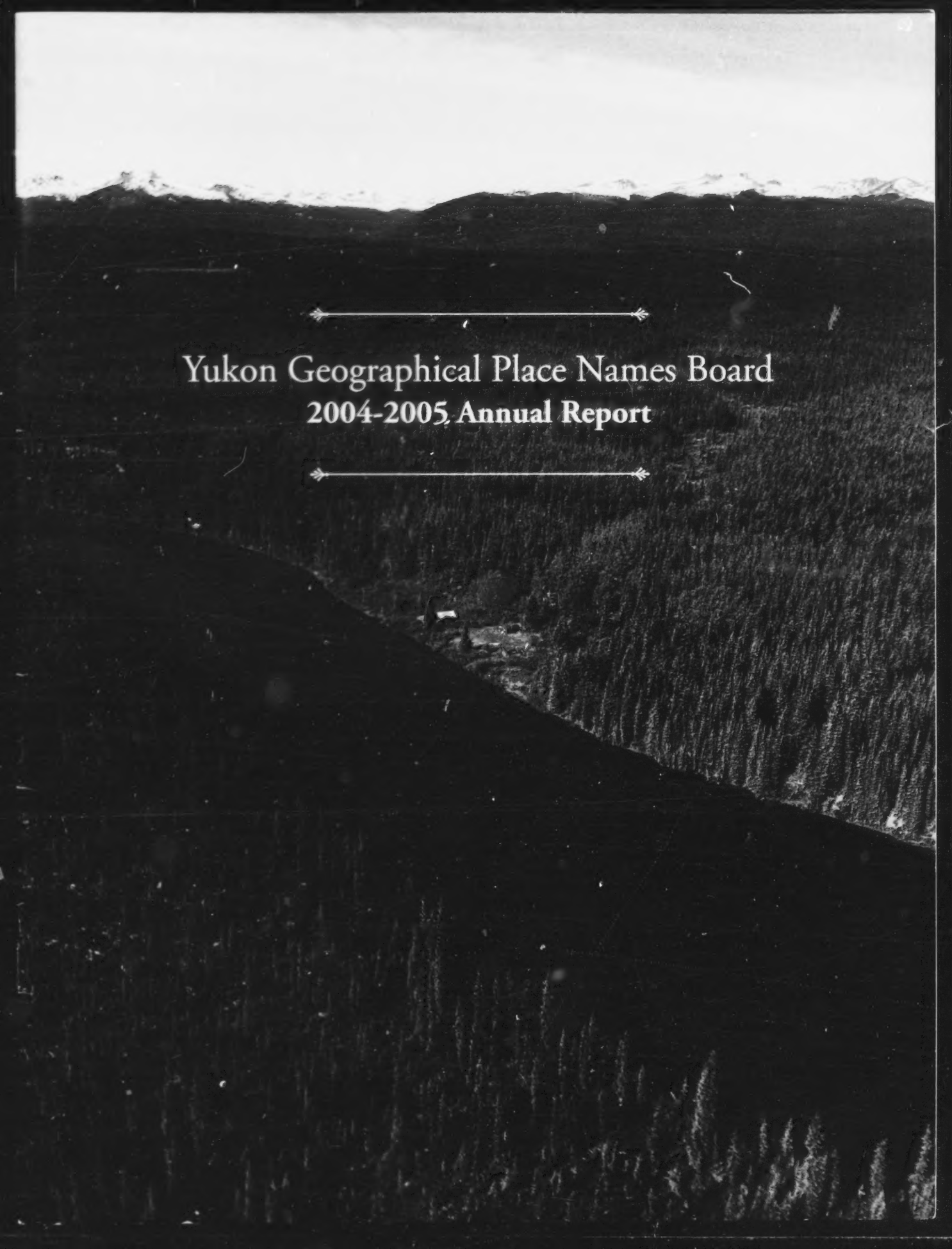
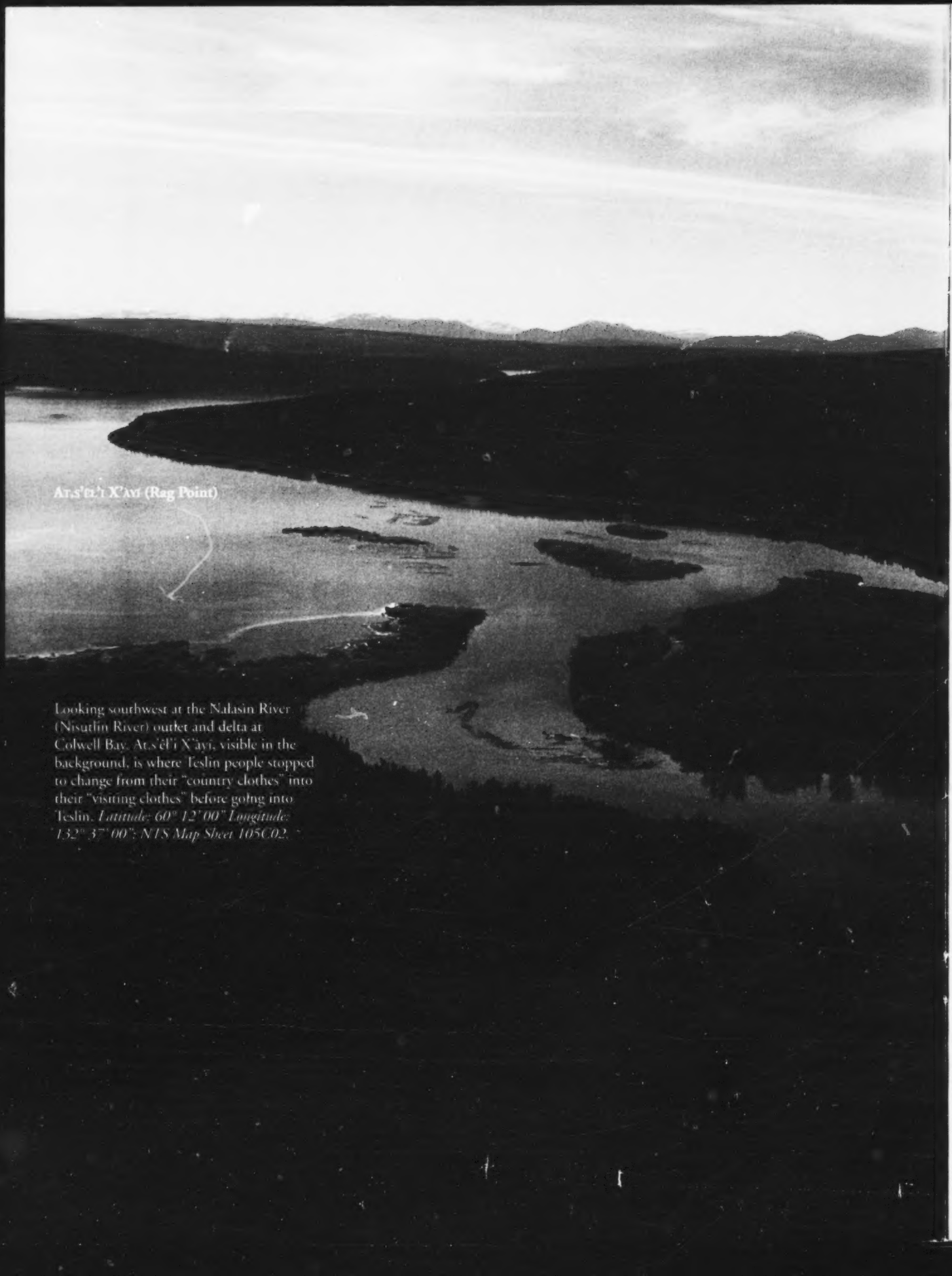


Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

2004-2005 Annual Report



At.s'éł.'i X'ayí (Rag Point)

Looking southwest at the Nalasin River (Nisutlin River) outlet and delta at Colwell Bay. At.s'él'i X'ayi, visible in the background, is where Teslin people stopped to change from their "country clothes" into their "visiting clothes" before going into Teslin. *Latitude: 60° 12' 00" Longitude: 132° 37' 00"; NTS Map Sheet 105C02.*

2007-03413/

Introduction

The names of places reflect Yukon's diverse cultures, history, and landscape. Names in the Yukon such as Aishihik, Kusawa, Tuchitua, are just a few of the native names found on a modern map of the Yukon. Yukon First Nations named rivers, mountains, lakes and landmarks long before the first non-native explorers and settlers arrived in the territory. Names such as Gyò Cho Chú (Big Salmon River) tell where animals and fish are plentiful. Other names, such as Thechàl Män (Sekulman Lake), 'Stone Scraper for Hides' describe artifacts, people and events. Today's Yukon First Nations still remember these names and are working to record them for future generations.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, explorers, fur traders, and prospectors came to the Yukon to trade with Indian people, search for gold, and explore the vast landscape, giving their own names to the land. The Danish explorer Vitus Bering, who entered the newly formed navy of the Russian Tsar Peter the Great and in 1724 was appointed to conduct an expedition to explore the water routes between Siberia and North America, was the first non-native to name a geographical feature in northwest America. In 1741, Bering named an island lying off the coast in the proximity of a very prominent mountain. Anchoring near the island he gave it the name of St. Elias as it was that Saint's day. The dominant mountain in question was, later in the eighteenth century, given the name of the island and Mount St. Elias became one of several peaks that define the border between Canada's Yukon Territory and the 49th State of Alaska.

While Bering and explorers to follow gave names to geographical features without asking the local names for places, others, such as geologist George Dawson and the Yukon's first Commissioner, William Ogilvie, recorded many native names during their years in the Yukon, including the Yusezyu and Tatchun Rivers in central Yukon.

Many of the official names on the Yukon map today were given by non-native settlers who came to the Yukon during the Gold Rush period. In the area around Dawson City, Allgold, Bonanza, Eureka, and Nogold celebrate the successes - and failures - of the miners who came to the territory during the Klondike Gold Rush. Names such as Carcross (from Caribou Crossing), Fox Lake, and Eagle's Nest Bluff, testify to the richness of Yukon's wildlife resources. Other places, such as Five Finger Rapids on the Yukon River, Blackstone Mountain, and White River, were named for the shape, colour, and form of the land and water itself. One of the best known names of this type is Whitehorse, which took its name from the White Horse Rapids, whose foamy white crests reminded early prospectors of horses' manes. Another version tells of a Chief's white horse drowning there.

On the cover:
Looking east at the old village site on the Natasìn (Nisutlin River) at Hundred Mile Creek. Latitude: 61° 04'; Longitude 132° 55' ; NTS Map Sheet 105F.

Yukon's Place Names Process

In 1897, Canada established the Geographic Board of Canada whose mandate was to approve official place names across the country. Interestingly, one of the motivations for establishing this board came from events happening in the Yukon, from the discovery of gold in the Klondike. Today, the successor to this Board is known as the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) which until recently was referred to as the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN). The GNBC is made up of 23 members representing the provinces and territories, as well as federal departments that deal with surveying, mapping, translation, archives, parks, and native affairs.

In 1986, the responsibility for naming geographical features was transferred from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to the Government of Yukon, putting geographical naming in the hands of Yukon residents for the first time. As part of this transfer the Government of Yukon established the Yukon Geographical Names Board (YGNB) in 1987 to undertake the job of researching and approving geographical names.

In 1995, under the Yukon Land Claims Agreement, the Yukon Geographical Names Board was replaced by the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board (YGPNB). Like its predecessor, it was established with the primary function and responsibility to consider and recommend the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Yukon.

The Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

The Yukon Geographical Place Names Board (YGPNB) is constituted under the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), signed by the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), the Yukon Government and the Government of Canada. The Board's primary function is to consider and recommend the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Yukon with special reference to Chapter 13, Section 11 of the UFA. However, the Board's mandate does not include the naming/ renaming of features or sites within municipal boundaries or of transportation corridors (highways and bridges).

Board Member Appointments

The Board is comprised of six Yukoners each having a common interest in developing place name policies that address all Yukoners. Three members are nominated by the Yukon Government and three by the Council of Yukon First Nations. All Board members are appointed for three-year terms by the Minister of Cultural Services (Yukon Government) and are currently in the first year of their terms that expire in June, 2007.

Board Member Profiles

- John Ritter: During the 2004-2005 fiscal year period Mr. Ritter acted as one of the Co-Chairs of the Board. He is also the Director of the Yukon Native Language Centre. He was re-appointed on June 1, 2004 for his fourth consecutive, three-year term to the Board.

As a linguist, his contribution to the spelling and pronunciation of native place names is invaluable. Also crucial to the place name application process is his ability to provide the Board with translation services during consultation periods held with native elders.

- Robert Lee Jackson: Mr. Jackson who also acts as a Co-Chair for the Board was first appointed to the Board on June 1, 2004 for a three-year term.

Robert Lee Jackson has worked in the Yukon First Nation field for twenty years. Prior to that he worked for the Highways Department for four seasons, and then for four seasons with Yukon Lands and Forests. Robert Lee also sits on the National Elders Council and the Residential School Working Group.

- Margaret Workman: Ms. Workman retired in June, 2004, after serving as a Southern Tutchone language specialist for over twenty years. She was re-appointed to the Yukon Geographical Place Name Board on June 1, 2004 as one of its original members serving on the Board for her third term. She has been involved with Yukon place names work for many years.

- Monty Alford: A retired federal hydrographer and resident of the Yukon for fifty-five years, Mr. Alford was first appointed to the Board in August, 2003. With mountaineering his avocation he is not only familiar with the waterways of the Yukon but also many of the mountain ranges. It is this familiarity with the overall geography of the Yukon that allows him to contribute to the work of the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board. Mr. Alford is the author of five books. He is a Member of the Order of Canada and holder of the Queen's Medal.

- Randall Tetlichi: Mr. Tetlichi was first appointed to the Board on June 1, 2004 for a three-year term. Mr. Tetlichi lives in Old Crow where he works as a consultant. He is a fluent speaker of the Gwich'in language.

- Polly Thorp: Ms. Thorp was first appointed to the Board on June 1, 2004 for a three-year term. Though moving to Whitehorse in 2003, Polly has lived in the north the previous 25 years. Combined with a degree in Native Studies from Trent University and with a recent diploma from Yukon College, she has a solid understanding of northern cultures and issues. She is an avid hiker, trail runner and cross country skier. She brings to the Board a keen interest in Yukon and northern landscape, history and culture.

- Jeff Hunston: Mr. Hunston has sat on the Board as an ex-officio since 1995. He is currently Manager of the Yukon Heritage Resources Unit, Cultural Services Branch, with the Yukon Government. Mr. Hunston sits on the Board as the Yukon Member for the Geographical Place Names Board of Canada (GNBC).

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board: *Monty Alford, Robert Lee Jackson (Co-Chair), Randall Tetlichi, Polly Thorp, Margaret Workman and John Ritter (Co-Chair). Missing from the photo is Jeff Hunston.*

Yukon's Place Name Review Process

Initially, place name applications are submitted to the Yukon Government's Heritage Resources Unit, a component of Cultural Services Branch within the Department of Tourism & Culture.

Once place name applications have been received by the Yukon Government, the Yukon Toponymist is assigned with the task of establishing correct locations of proposed place name sites, ensuring that the correct spellings have been recorded on applications and verifying the reasons for place name requests. This helps to ensure that the proposed place name features are accurately located by latitude and longitude and that place names' meaning, spelling and cultural significance have been properly documented. Once the information provided on applications has been confirmed by Yukon Government staff, they are forwarded to the Board for review and for consideration in the naming/renaming process. If the applications are considered to have merit, they are recommended to the Minister of Culture and Tourism for approval.

Processing place name applications in a timely manner is a priority of the Board. However, the speed with which a place name application is processed is dependent on a number of factors that include:

- Completeness of the applications when initially submitted to the Heritage Resources Unit, Yukon Cultural Services Branch;
- Whether the place name sites are on First Nation traditional or settlement lands; on federal or territorial lands;
- Whether the sites identified are located within parks;
- Whether the location of the place name sites have been accurately determined;
- Whether the historical or cultural backgrounds have been given.

The status of individual place name applications is tracked by means of a Geographical Place Names Application Process Flow Sheet (See Figure 1).

Naming Features On Settlement Lands

Under the Land Claims Final Agreement, the Board is directed to consider the following procedures when reviewing place name applications on Settlement Lands:

- When considering the naming or renaming of places or features located within the traditional territory of a Yukon First Nation, or when acting with a federal agency where joint jurisdiction over the naming of the place or feature exists, the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board shall consult with that Yukon First Nation or federal agency.
- A Yukon First Nation may name or rename geographical features on settlement land and such place names shall be deemed to have been approved by the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.
- Traditional aboriginal place names shall be included to the extent practicable and in accordance with map production specifications of Canada on revised maps of the National Topographic Series.

Community Consultation And The Review Process

During the 2004-2005 report period the Board continued to consult with Yukoners and to encourage Yukon First Nations, other organizations and individuals to submit place name applications describing features they consider to be of historical or cultural significance.

Under an established review process, place name applications submitted are first reviewed by the Yukon Government Toponymist who confirms the application's accuracy and completeness. The Yukon Toponymist then forwards the application to the Board that as a matter of routine uses the following criteria to assess applications:

1. First priority shall be given to names with long-standing local usage by the general public, particularly indigenous names in the local native language.

2. The Board has no jurisdiction over the names of municipalities, parks, territorial divisions or other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation.

3. Names for rivers, lakes, creeks, and other physical features shall be used for the entire feature. For example, the Yukon River has to have one name for its entire length although it is visible from more than one location such as from Whitehorse, and again from Dawson City.

4. Proposals to name a place or geographical feature after a specific person shall show that the person to be commemorated has contributed significantly to the area where the feature is located. In most cases, personal names may be given to geographical features only after a person's death.

5. When proposing names for previously unnamed features, those for which no local names exist, preference shall be given to names from native languages, names that describe the feature, names associated with historical events, and names of people who have made an important contribution to the area where the place name is proposed.

6. Geographical names shall be recognizable words or acceptable combinations of words, and shall be in good taste. Names that are discriminatory or derogatory from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed, or political affiliation shall not be accepted.

7. The spelling and accenting of names shall agree with the rules of the language in which they were written.

8. The Board has no jurisdiction over the assignment of names within municipalities, parks, territorial divisions, or other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation. Proposals for name changes within a national park are subject to federal review and approval. When geographical features are wholly or partly located within a national park, names and name change proposals are to be referred directly to the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC).

Place Name Application Review

Application Backlog

During 2004-2005 there were 131 place names applications requiring additional information before further Board review.

These include:

Applicant	Number of Applications To be Reviewed	Year(s) Submitted
Miscellaneous	15	1986-2003
Teslin Tlingit Council	44	1988-1993
Selkirk First Nation	12	1991
Carcross/Tagish First Nation	1	1992
Champagne/Aishihik First Nation	3	1992
Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation	55	1997-1998
Other	1	2005
Total	**131**	

In many instances, the Board has determined that to properly understand the cultural and historical significance of a proposed place name, face-to-face consultation with First Nation elders and other experts is required. Through this consultation process the Board believes it can accurately assess the application as well as document the place name's cultural and historical significance.

In some instances applications that have been forwarded to the Board have been found deficient in geographical, cultural or historic accuracy. For example, some applications contain incorrect spelling of place name features, others have not been properly located on topographic maps, and still others have not demonstrated the proposed name's cultural or historical significance. As a result, the Board requests through the Yukon Toponymist that the applicant submit any missing information so that the Board can complete its review.

Applications Reviewed During 2004-2005

During 2004-2005, the Board met six times to review the following place name applications:

Place Names Applications Reviewed by the Board During 2004-2005

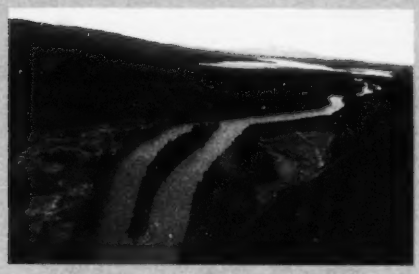
Applicant	Applications Reviewed
Kluane First Nation	10
Teslin Tlingit Council	16
Carcross/Tagish First Nation	1
Ross River Roundtable	1
Other	3
Total Reviewed	**31**

Of these, two were recommended to the Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture for approval while the remaining applications were considered incomplete and additional information required before the Board could complete its review.

Place Names Documentation Project

Since 1996, the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board, in partnership with the Yukon Native Language Centre, has cost shared a place name photo documentation project that visually records Yukon sites and features. The following photographs are examples of place name features visually documented.

All place name photos in this report were taken by Wayne Towriss for the Yukon Native Language Centre and the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.



L'awshà Gúksh (Bank along a river shore) — The Tlingit name refers to a clay bank located just north of Snake Island on the east bank of the Nałasìn (Nisutlin River). *Latitude: 60° 17' 25" 132° 32' 25"; NTS Map Sheet 105C07.*

At.s'êł'i X'àyí (Rag Point) — looking southwest at the Nałasìn River (Nisutlin River) outlet and delta at Colwell Bay. At.s'êł'i X'àyí, visible in the background, is where Teslin people stopped to change from their "country clothes" into their "visiting clothes" before going into Teslin. *Latitude: 60° 12' 00" Longitude: 132° 37' 00"; NTS Map Sheet 105C02.*

Kêtladi X'àt'i (Seagull Island) — looking northwest at Kêtladi X'àt'i which is the larger of two islands in Teslin Lake on which seagulls frequently nest. First Nation peoples collected eggs from the island. *Latitude: 60° 13' 20" Longitude: 132° 57' 10"; NTS Map Sheet 105C02.*

Gijukkúdi (Golden Eagle Nest) — looking north at Gijukkúdi. The name refers to "where the golden mountain eagles nest". The eagles rest on the mountain site for days "picking up groundhogs". The mountain can be seen from the South Canol Road. *Latitude: 61° 15' 00" Longitude: 133° 03' 30"; NTS Map Sheet 105F06.*

Tày.â Shak.ák'u — looking southwest at Tày.â Shak.ák'u. This Tlingit name refers to the series of small lakes or ponds at the head of Fat Creek. The lakes and ponds were called "Fat" (Tày.â) because there was "good food under water" and therefore "fat moose" resulted from feeding on lush aquatic vegetation. *Latitude: 60° 10' 00" Longitude: 132° 54' 00"; NTS Map Sheet 105C02.*

Watsíx Têxh'i (Caribou Lakes) — looking south at Watsíx Têxh'i, "caribou heart" in the Tlingit language. The Tlingit people would stop to hunt woodland caribou on their way to Wolf Lake. The large Wolf Lake is visible in the background. *Latitude: 60° 49' 30" Longitude: 131° 37' 30"; NTS Map Sheet 105B13.*

Nûsgu Xhâdi (Wolverine Lake) — over Wolf Lake looking south at Nûsgu Xhâdi. The Tlingit name translates as "wolverine fish lake". The name suggests that there are so many fish in the lake that wolverine are able to catch and eat them from the shore. *Latitude 60° 33' 10" Longitude: 131° 43' 00". NTS Map Sheet 105B12.*

Launch Of The Board's Web Site

The Yukon Geographical Place Names Board web site was launched in January of 2005.

Board members believe the web site is a useful tool for informing the public about Yukon's rich culture and history that is reflected in the place names. As well, the Board believes the web site is an excellent vehicle for describing processes and criteria used to evaluate place name applications.

Additionally, the web site offers viewers the opportunity to observe photographs of Yukon features and to listen to sound files of First Nation elders pronouncing the names of these features in their own language. For example, photographs of Jekudìtl'eda (Alligator Lake) and Nänìdhät (Old Woman Rock) are illustrated, and sound files of these names in Southern Tutchone and Hän are featured.

To view the Board's web site go to: www.yukonplacenames.ca.

Over The Next Year

Over the next year the Board will continue to review the backlog of place name applications and address new applications received. The Board will continue to work with the Yukon Toponymist to ensure that all place name applications contain accurate geographical, cultural, linguistic and historical information. In addition, the Board will continue to work with First Nation elders and the Yukon Native Language Centre towards the preservation of place names in Yukon First Nation languages. The Board anticipates that these names once recorded in sound files will be available to the public on the Board's web site.

During 2004-2005 the Board will consult with place name applicants to ensure place names sites are photographed as part of the Board's ongoing documentation project. A high priority during 2005-2006 will be the photo documentation of place names features in the Teslin area.

In the year to come the Board will continue to work with governments to ensure that approved place name features are included in accordance with map production specifications of Canada on revised maps of the National Topographic Series.

Yukon Place Name Information

For additional information about the activities and mandate of the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board please contact:

Secretariat
Yukon Geographical Place Names Board
P.O. Box 31164
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada, Y1A 5P7

Telephone: (867) 393-3982
Fax: (867) 667-7006
email: yukonplacenames@yknet.ca
www.yukonplacenames.ca

For information about the Yukon geographical place names process or to obtain a status report on an application submitted contact:

Yukon Toponymist
Yukon Cultural Services Branch
Heritage Resources Unit, P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada, Y1A 2C6

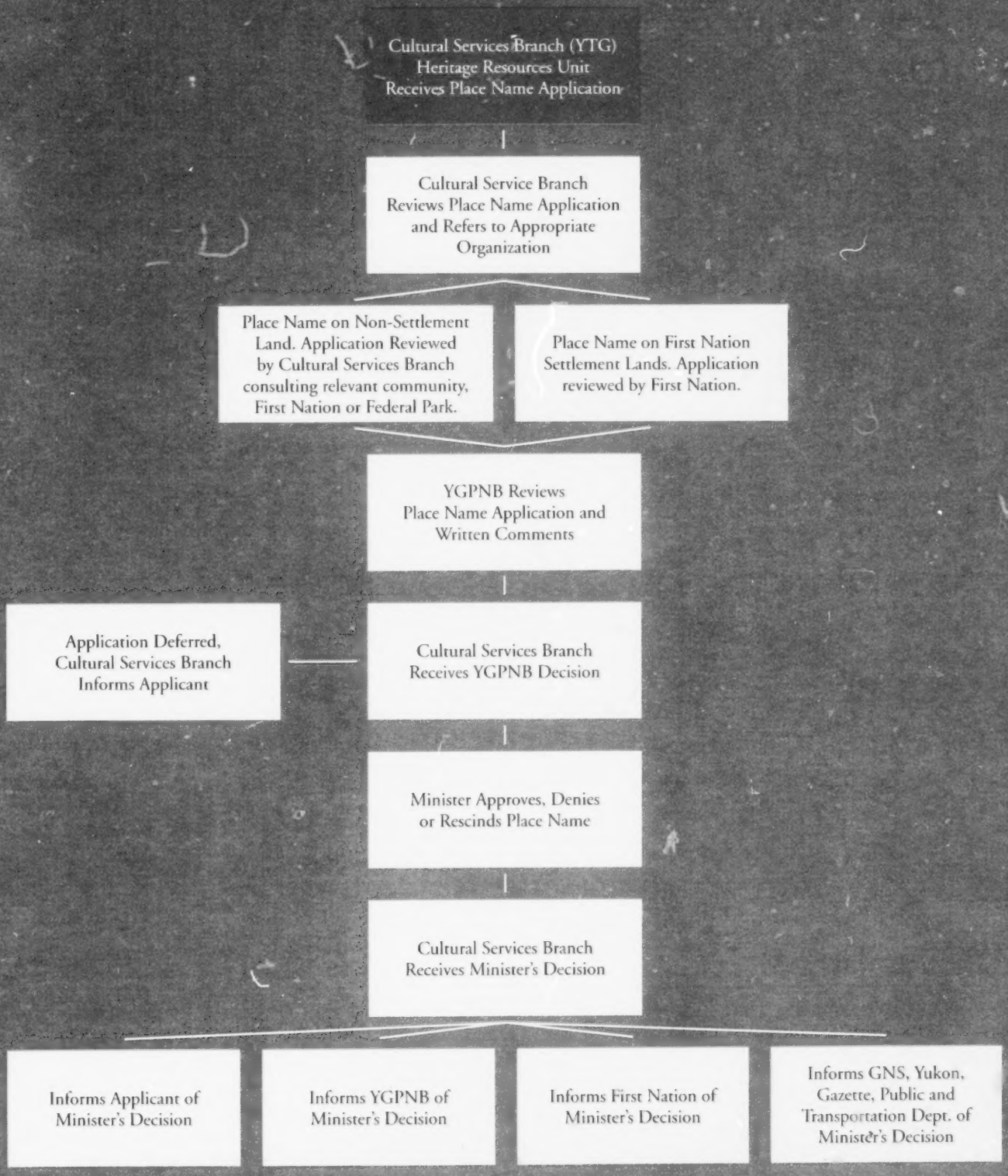
Telephone: (867)-667-3099
Fax: (867) 667-8023
email: garry.njootli@gov.yk.ca
www.yukonheritage.com

Information about Yukon and other Canadian place names can be obtained by consulting the Geographic Names Board of Canada database at:

Geo Names
Natural Resources Canada
Room 634–615 Booth Street
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada, K1A 0E9

www.geonames.nrcan.gc.ca

Figure 1: **Geographical Place Names Application Process Flow Sheet**



CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANTS

mackay.ca

MacKay LLP

Auditors' Report

To the Members of the
Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

We have audited the balance sheet of Yukon Geographical Place Names Board as at March 31, 2005 and the statements of revenue and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Board's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating overall financial statement presentation.

The financial statements as at March 31, 2004 were not audited. The closing balances of the asset and liability accounts for the March 31, 2004 year enter into the determination of the current year's operations, and accordingly we were unable to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to revenue, expenditures, and excess of revenue over expenditures.

In our opinion, except as noted in the preceding paragraph, the effects of adjustments, if any, which we may have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves with respect to the opening balances, these financial statements present fairly in all material respects, the financial position of the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board as at March 31, 2005, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Whitehorse, Yukon

July 27, 2005

MacKay LLP

Chartered Accountants

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

For the year ended March 31,	2005	2004
Revenue		
Contribution - Yukon Government	$ 62,096	$ 61,065
Investment	1,400	711
	63,496	61,776
Expenditures		
Advertising	-	601
Annual report	7,312	4,064
Documentation	2,599	-
Honoraria	7,332	3,375
Information brochures and pamphlets	500	1,544
Insurance	705	627
Office equipment	1,103	-
Office	2,593	2,086
Professional fees	3,101	1,449
Consultation	1,188	-
Secretariat	40,862	27,821
Telephone	1,090	240
Travel and accommodation	10,000	3,247
Web-site maintenance	5,863	2,622
	84,248	47,676
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	**$ (20,752)**	$ 14,100

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended March 31,			2005	2004
	Invested in capital assets	Unrestricted	Total	Total
Net Assets, beginning of year	$ 10,897	$ 153,052	**$ 163,949**	$ 149,849
Invested in capital assets	1,103	-	**1,103**	-
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	-	(20,752)	**(20,752)**	14,100
Net Assets, end of year	$ 12,000	$ 132,300	**$ 144,300**	$ 163,949

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Balance Sheet

As at March 31,	2005	2004
Assets		
Current		
Cash	$ 135,966	$ 156,116
Accounts receivable	2,375	1,320
Prepaid expenses	111	101
	138,452	157,537
Capital assets (note 2)	**$ 12,000**	$ 10,897
	$ 150,452	$ 168,434
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**$ 6,152**	$ 4,485
Net assets		
Invested in capital assets	**12,000**	10,897
Unrestricted	**132,300**	153,052
	144,300	163,949
	$ 150,452	$ 168,434

Approved on behalf of the Board:

_____, Member

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31,	2005	2004
Cash provided by (used in)		
Operating activities		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	$ (20,752)	$ 14,100
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	(1,055)	500
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,667	(6,009)
Prepaid expenses	(10)	-
	(20,150)	8,591
Investing activities		
Purchase in Capital assets	(1,103)	-
Increase in net assets invested in capital assets	1,103	-
	-	-
Increase (decrease) in cash	**(20,150)**	8,591
Cash, beginning of year	**156,116**	147,525
Cash, end of year	**$ 135,966**	$ 156,116

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2005

1. Accounting Policies

The organization is a non-profit entity established under the Umbrella Final Agreement, passed by the Government of Canada and Government of Yukon, to consider and recommend the naming or re-naming of places or features located within the Yukon, to the Yukon Minister of Heritage.

(a) Capital assets

Capital assets are expensed when they are purchased and are recorded on the balance sheet at their historical cost. The net assets invested in capital assets account represents the historical cost of all capital assets less the principal amount of any debt outstanding on the purchase of the assets.

(b) Revenue

Revenue from grants is recorded when received or when it is determined they are receivable, whichever occurs first and are credited to revenue in the period to which they relate.

(c) Financial instruments

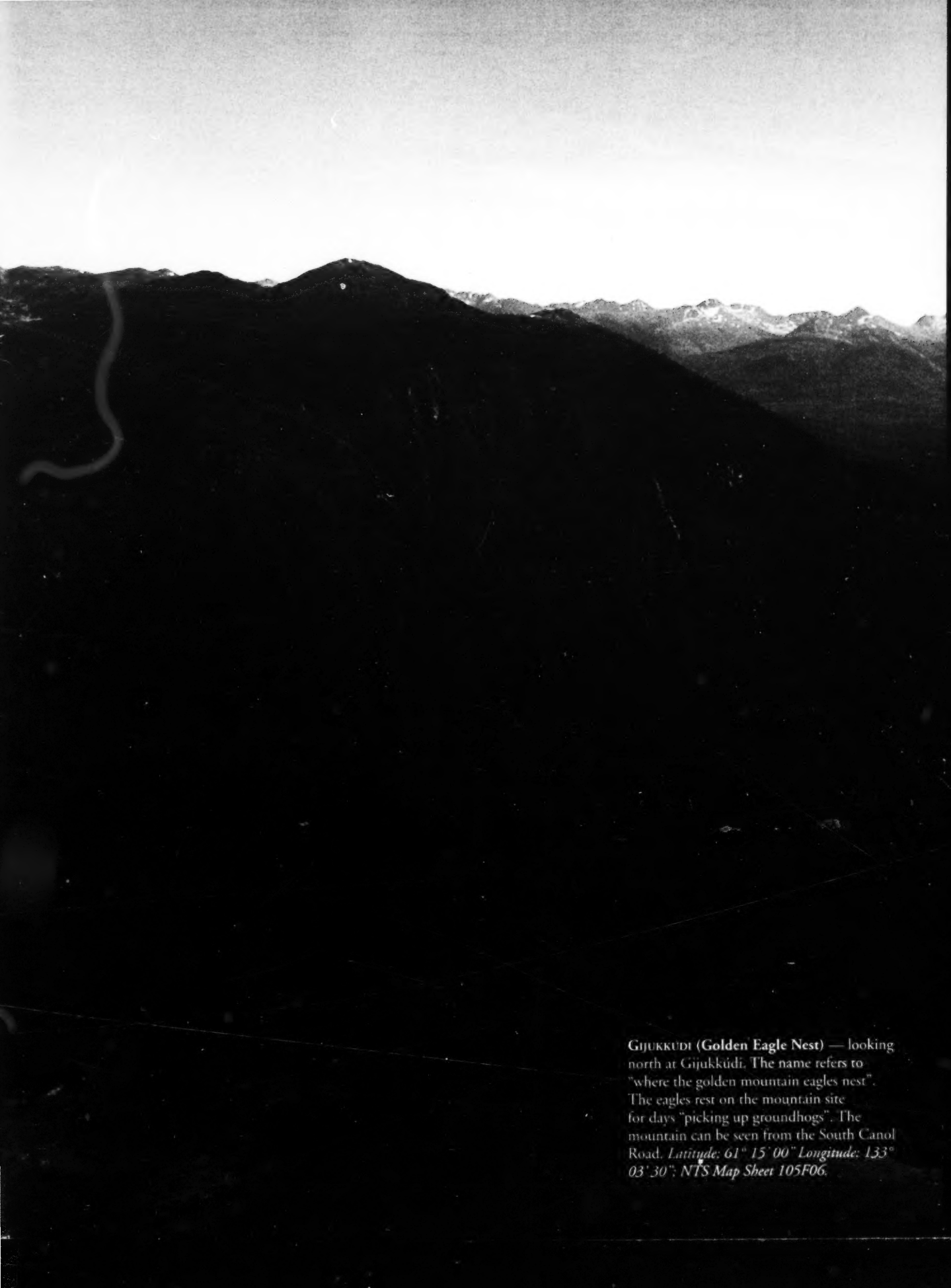
All significant financial assets, financial liabilities and equity instruments of the Board are either recognized or disclosed in the financial statements together with available information for a reasonable assessment of future cash flows, interest rate risk and credit risk.

2. Capital Assets at cost

	2005	2004
Office furniture and equipment	$ 12,000	$ 10,897

3. Economic Dependence

The board is dependent upon government funds for the continuation of its activities.



GIJUKKŪDI **(Golden Eagle Nest)** — looking north at Gijukkūdi. The name refers to "where the golden mountain eagles nest". The eagles rest on the mountain site for days "picking up groundhogs". The mountain can be seen from the South Canol Road. *Latitude: 61° 15' 00" Longitude: 133° 03' 30"; NTS Map Sheet 105F06.*